Memorable Gifts

Introduction

Never again will you face the dilemma of finding the perfect gift for those special people in your life! *Memorable Gifts* is filled with delightful, creative ideas for unique, personalized gifts. Each project is designed to make a lasting impression without requiring much time or expense. Full-color photos and concise step-by-step instructions make gift giving easy...and fun!

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SCENTED GIFTS

Potpourri

Potpourri makes a decorative room accent that emits delicate aromas. Presented in a pretty bowl, it makes an ideal gift. You can create your own potpourri blends with the fragrance, look, and colors you desire.

Essential oils are combined with dried naturals to create potpourri. The oils enhance the scents of the plant materials while adding fragrance of their own. Essential oils are available in craft stores, beauty salons, health food stores, and bath shops. They range in scent from sweet to spicy to woodsy.

Fixatives are necessary to absorb and retain the scents of your potpourri. Orris root, calamus, and cellulose-fiber fixatives are available in craft stores and from mail-order suppliers. Some spices, such as cumin seeds, coriander, cloves, nutmeg, and cinnamon, act as fixatives, as do broken corn cobs, frankincense, cedarwood, gum benzoin, oak moss, and oil of sandalwood. In potpourri, more than one type of fixative is often used.

Wildflower Blend

- 1 oz. (25 g) orris root powder or 1/4 cup (50 mL) cut orris root, chopped calamus, or cellulose-fiber fixative
- Four drops geranium essential oil
- Three drops lavender essential oil
- 1 qt. (1 L) mixed dried flower petals and heads
- 1 cup (250 mL) dried globe amaranth blossoms
- 4 oz. (125 g) lavender
- 2 oz. (50 g) lemon verbena leaves
- 1 oz. (25 g) uva ursi or oregano leaves
- 10 to 12 cinnamon sticks, 3" (7.5 cm) long
- Small dried sunflower blossoms, for embellishment

Rose Blend

- 1 oz. (25 g) orris root powder or 1/4 cup (50 mL) cut orris root, chopped calamus, or cellulose-fiber fixative
- 1/2 teaspoon (2 mL) ground cinnamon
- Four drops rose essential oil
- 1 qt. (1 L) dried mixed rose petals
- 1 cup (250 mL) dried globe amaranth blossoms
- 2 oz. (50 g) lavender
- 5 or 6 star anise
- 1/2 teaspoon (2 mL) whole cloves
- A few dried rose leaves, for color
- Additional dried rose heads and leaves, for embellishment

Making Potpourri

1 Place fixative and any ground spices in bowl; add drops of essential oils. Mix thoroughly.

Citrus Blend

- 1 oz. (25 g) orris root powder or 1/4 cup (50 mL) cut orris root, chopped calamus, or cellulose-fiber fixative
- 1 1/2 teaspoons (7 mL) ground nutmeg
- Four drops citrus essential oil
- Two drops frankincense essential oil
- 1 qt. (1 L) dried orange, lemon, or lime slices
- 4 oz. (125 g) dried lemon peel
- 2 oz. (50 g) eucalyptus leaves
- 1 oz. (25 g) each of tilia and kesu flowers
- 10 to 12 each of bay leaves and star anise
- 10 to 12 cinnamon sticks, 3" (7.5 cm) long
- 1 tablespoon (15 mL) juniper berries
- Small dried sunflower blossoms, for embellishment

Pine-forest Blend

- 1 oz. (25 g) orris root powder or 1/4 cup (50 mL) cut orris root, chopped calamus, or cellulose-fiber fixative
- Four drops pine essential oil
- Two drops eucalyptus essential oil
- Two drops sandalwood essential oil
- 1 qt. (1 L) mixture of small pinecones, slivered birch bark, green eucalyptus, and princess pine and cedar needles
- 10 to 15 poppy pods
- 10 to 12 cinnamon sticks, 3" (7.5 cm) long
- 1/2 oz. (15 g) curly pods
- 1/2 teaspoon (2 mL) whole cloves
- Large pinecones, for embellishment

2 Add remaining ingredients, except embellishments, to bowl. Mix thoroughly to evenly distribute ingredients.

3 Place potpourri in airtight container. Store potpourri and embellishments in dry, dark place for at least six weeks; shake potpourri container daily for first week. The longer potpourri is stored, the more its fragrance matures.

4 Place the potpourri in decorative open container. Embellish with reserved naturals. Store unused potpourri in an airtight container.

Votive CANDLES

Candles are very affordable and almost everyone likes to use them, so they are a practical and well-received gift. Votive candles are one of the most basic types of candle and the easiest to present decoratively.

Purchase several plain glass votive candle holders and a wide assortment of candles in a variety of colors, so you have them on hand for any occasion. With a few simple embellishments, such as ribbon, dried naturals, or garland, you can have lovely gifts on a moment's notice.

Ribbon Votive

MATERIALS

- Glass hurricane votive candle holder
- Wired ribbon

1 Cut ribbon 18" (46 cm) longer than circumference of base of candle holder. Wrap ribbon around base. Tie ribbon with bow. Trim ends of ribbon as desired.

Rope Votive

MATERIALS

- Glass votive candle holder
- Sisal rope
- Hot glue gun and glue sticks

1 Secure the end of rope to side of candle holder at base, using hot glue.

2 Wrap rope around candle holder in a spiral from bottom to top, securing with hot glue as you wrap. Cover the entire candle holder in this manner.

3 Trim rope at top of candle holder at an angle; secure with hot glue.

1 Cut ribbon 1/2" (1.3 cm) longer than circumference of candle holder.

2 Secure one end of ribbon to side of candle holder, using hot glue. Wrap ribbon around candle holder, completely covering it with ribbon. Fold end of ribbon under for a clean edge; secure with hot glue.

3 Secure dried naturals around the base of candle holder, using hot glue. If naturals are too round or bulky, such as pinecones, cut them in half with craft scissors before securing to candle holder.

Dried Naturals Votive

MATERIALS

❖Glass votive candle holder ❖Ribbon with width equal to candle holder height ❖Hot glue gun and glue sticks ❖Dried naturals, such as miniature pinecones or flowers

1 Wind garland once around base of candle holder, twisting end around itself to secure.

2 Wrap garland around candle holder in a spiral from bottom to top. Twist top end around itself to secure.

Star garland Votive

MATERIALS

❖Glass votive candle holder ❖Mylar® wired star garland

a
b
c

Bottled gifts

Glass bottles and decanters are available in a wide variety of shapes, styles, and colors. When they are embellished with ribbons, dried naturals, or decorative bottle stoppers, they make easy and inexpensive gifts. Go a step further and fill them with herbal cooking oils or vinegars, homemade vanilla, scented bath oils, or bath salts. Give individual bottles, or select complementary bottles for a collection.

Bottled gifts include:

a) Herb-flavored vinegar, *b)* flavored cooking oil, *c)* bath salts, *d)* scented bath oil, *e)* homemade vanilla extract.

Stone bottle Stopper

MATERIALS

- Rough-edged stone or crystal
- Bottle cork
- Instant-bond glue
- Thin, flexible copper wire
- Needlenose pliers

1 Attach stone or crystal to top of cork, using instant-bond glue; hold until set.

2 Wrap the wire around stone and top of the cork several times, crisscrossing wire several times over stone.

3 Twist end of wire around crisscrossed wire to secure, using pliers.

Select a stone in an appropriate size for the cork and bottle on which it will go.

Flavored cooking Oils

1 Wash and dry fresh herbs, such as rosemary, tarragon, thyme, basil, or dill; place about three sprigs of selected herb in bottle. Fill bottle with olive oil or canola oil; cap tightly. Store in refrigerator for three weeks before using, shaking bottle occasionally to distribute flavor.

Dried chili peppers can also be used with this technique to make flavored oil.

Advise gift recipients to keep oil refrigerated and to use it within one month of having received it.

Herb-flavored Vinegars

1 Wash and dry fresh herbs, such as those mentioned in *Flavored Cooking Oils*; place two or three sprigs of selected herb in bottle. Fill bottle with white wine vinegar or cider vinegar; cap tightly. Place bottle in sunny place for two to three weeks. Strain vinegar; return vinegar to clean bottle. Store in cool, dark place.

Scented Bath Oil

1 Place undyed dried flowers in decorative bottle, if desired. In a measuring cup, combine 100% pure sesame oil and pure scented essential oil; use ½ cup (125 mL) sesame oil to 2 teaspoons (10 mL) essential oil. Fill bottle with prepared oil. Use bath oil sparingly in bath water or for body massages.

Homemade Vanilla Extract

1 Split a vanilla bean, lengthwise, place in small, decorative bottle. Fill bottle with quality vodka; use ¾ cup (175 mL) vodka to one bean. Cap bottle tightly. For maximum flavor, let extract steep for several months. Store in cool, dark place.

Personalized Stationery

Personalized stationery is something people always appreciate and seldom buy for themselves. With very simple stamping techniques and a variety of ink pad colors, you can create one-of-a-kind cards, envelopes, notepads, or letter paper.

Select a stamp with a picture that suits the gift recipient's personality. For example, if someone likes sailing, use a sailboat stamp to accent stationery. For a refined look, create monogrammed stationery. You can even have a personalized address stamp made, for minimal cost. Rolling stamps that create a repeated, unbroken pattern are also available.

Tie bundled-up note cards with silk ribbon, or place stationery in a special box, tied with cording.

Stamping techniques & tips

MATERIALS

❖Stamps ❖Ink pads ❖Blank note cards, envelopes, notepads, or loose paper

☞ Press stamp firmly onto the paper. Do not roll the stamp or the edges of the stamp may leave unwanted marks on the paper.

☞ Press stamp onto scrap paper a few times to ensure that stamp is sufficiently saturated with ink.

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Congratulation

WINE-BOTTLE Bags & containers

Wine is a favorite host or hostess gift. Play on its popularity by making a special bag or container in which to present a bottle of wine.

Wine bags can be found in housewares and wine stores, or you can use basic sewing techniques and fabric scraps to make your own. Fabric netting and gold cord are ideal for dressing up a bottle of champagne. Or protect your bottle of wine by making a heavy paper tube and packing shredded paper around the bottle.

Attach a small book to the neck of the bottle or wine bag to use as a wine-tasting journal for the wine enthusiast. If the gift is for a close friend, plan to pass the wine bag and journal back and forth on gift-giving occasions, and keep track of the new wines the two of you try.

Felt Wine Bag

MATERIALS

❖2 pieces of felt fabric, cut to 15" x 9" (38 x 23 cm) ❖Pinking shears ❖Needle and thread, or sewing machine ❖Ribbon or cording

1 Trim one short edge on each piece of fabric with pinking shears. These edges will be at the top of the bag.

2 Pin the fabric pieces right sides together. Stitch 1/4" (6 mm) from raw edges along sides and bottom. Press seam allowances open. Turn bag right side out.

3 Fold top 3" (7.5 cm) of bag over. Cut sixteen 1/4" (6 mm) vertical slits along fold at approximately 1" (2.5 cm) intervals. Unfold bag. Weave ribbon through slits; cinch bag closed, and tie ribbon with bow. If necessary, tie knots in ends of ribbon to prevent fraying.

To hang small book from ribbon, tie additional ribbon around length of inside of front cover and spine; tie to neck of bottle. Or drill a small hole in the top left corner of book, and thread ribbon through hole.

Paper Wine Cube

MATERIALS

❖Heavy corrugated paper ❖Hot glue gun and glue sticks ❖Shredded paper

1 Wrap paper around the bottle to determine size of piece needed. Cut to desired height, leaving part of bottle neck exposed; width should be equal to circumference of bottle plus 3/4" (2 cm) for overlap.

Netting with Engraved tag

MATERIALS

❖Personalized brass tag, available in jewelry or gift stores ❖Drill and 1/16" drill bit ❖36" (91.5 cm) square of fabric netting ❖Gold cording ❖Thin gold string

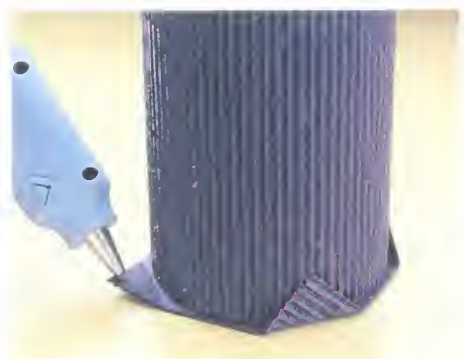
1 Drill a small hole in one or both ends of the personalized tag. Set aside.

2 Spread netting on flat surface. Set bottle upright in center of netting. Gather netting around neck of bottle. Tie gold cording around neck of bottle; secure with a knot. Fluff top of netting.

3 Thread string through hole in brass tag; tie string around neck of bottle.

2 Wrap paper around bottle to form tube. Secure seam with hot glue. Remove bottle.

3 Cut square of paper so its sides equal the diameter of tube. Center tube on square. Bend corners of square up along side of tube; secure with hot glue. (Bend corners along a straightedge for cleaner edges, if desired.)



4 Place bottle in the tube. Stuff shredded paper into tube around neck of the bottle.

Use multicolored Mylar® strips instead of shredded paper for a festive look.

OCEANVS
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Memory books

Create one-of-a-kind photo albums, journals, and address books by covering them with decorative paper or fabric. Embellish the front of the book with tassels, bows, small framed photos, buttons, fabric or paper collages, or simple mementos. Choose the embellishments to suit your recipient.

You can present your customized book with empty pages, so the recipient can have the fun of filling them. For example, if the book is for a traveler, you could wrap it with a map, embellish it with a compass, and tell your friend to use the book as a journal for documenting his next trip. Or, fill a small photo album with favorite pictures and add captions. Produce a family history for your parents, all the way from their wedding day to today.

Paper-covered Memory book

MATERIALS

❖Blank book or photo album ❖Art paper or wrapping paper, in two coordinating colors or patterns ❖Aerosol adhesive ❖Desired embellishments

1 Cut the paper 1" (2.5 cm) larger than the opened book on all sides. Place the paper facedown on work surface. Apply a generous coat of aerosol adhesive to the back of paper.

2 Place spine of book in center of paper; press gently. Working from spine to edge of cover, smooth one side of paper over front cover of book; rub paper into groove along spine with end of pencil. Repeat for back of book.

3 Fold excess paper from sides of front and back covers to inside of book; press and smooth paper to the inside of covers. Cut notches in paper along top and bottom of book at the spine. Fold paper in at spine.

4 Fold excess paper from tops and bottoms of the cover to inside of book; fold in corners as you would when wrapping a gift. Press and smooth the paper to inside of cover.

5 Cut second paper into two sheets with dimensions $\frac{1}{4}$" (6 mm) smaller than inside of covers on all sides. Spray backs of sheets with aerosol adhesive. Press sheets to inside of front and back covers. Embellish book as desired.

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SPRINGTIME Gardener GIFTS

Early spring is the time of year when people begin to brush off winter's hold and start poring over the seed catalogs. If you know someone who eagerly waits for the frost to leave the ground, present that person with a selection of gardening goodies for your next gift-giving occasion.

Select a shallow basket with a handle—perfect for gathering flowers—and fill the basket with seed packets for flowers and herbs, a small bag of potting soil and peat pots, gardening gloves, a small trowel, and flower shears. Or wrap up a nice garden book; embellish the package with seed packets, or place a garden-center gift certificate inside the card.

OUTDOOR Survival kits

Outdoor parties are favorite events throughout the summer. If you are invited to a beach party or picnic, go prepared with "survival kits" for your hosts.

Since outdoor picnics are magnets for bugs, fill a basket with citronella candles, a pleasant-smelling insect repellent, and a mesh food umbrella to cover open containers of food. Decorative tablecloth weights are also helpful to keep the picnic table covering from blowing away. If the picnic is held on or near Independence Day or Flag Day, add sparklers; miniature flags; streamers; and red, white and blue candles to the basket.

Beach parties are fun outings for young and old alike. Treat your host with a beach towel, sandals, and sunscreen placed in a beach bag. If there will be children at the party, fill a mesh bag with items to entertain them at the beach—such as pails and shovels, spray bottles, water guns, and a beach ball.

Pinecone Kindlers
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Pinecone kindler BASKET

What could be better than a relaxing evening in front of the fire? For an inexpensive gift that is both useful and decorative, create a fire-starter basket filled with pinecone kindlers. If desired, add color sticks and long fireplace matches.

Pinecones dipped in paraffin wax burn hot for about 20 minutes while your fire gets started. They can be colored red and scented with cinnamon, or colored green and scented with pine, if desired. Most of the materials you'll need can be found in craft stores. To light a fire, center a pinecone kindler under stacked firewood and light its wick.

Pinecone Kindlers

MATERIALS

❖Double boiler ❖Paraffin wax, approximately 1 lb. (450 g) per six pinecones ❖Candle color squares and candle scent squares, one square each per 1 lb. (450 g) of wax ❖Candy thermometer ❖Muffin cups ❖Nonstick vegetable cooking spray ❖Wax-coated candlewicks, 6" (15 cm) lengths ❖Pinecones, 2" (5 cm) diameter ❖Tongs

1 Melt 1 lb. (450 g) paraffin wax in top of double boiler over boiling water. Add one square each of candle color and candle scent. Mix gently, using wooden spoon.

2 Spray muffin cups with nonstick cooking spray. Place one end of candlewicks in each muffin cup; allow other end to hang over sides of cups.

3 Cool melted paraffin to about 160 F (70 C). Dip pinecone in paraffin, turning to coat; remove with tongs and place coated pinecone upright in muffin cup. Repeat with remaining pinecones.

4 Remove top of double boiler containing remaining wax; dry outside of pan to prevent water from dripping onto pinecones. Slowly pour ½" (1.3 cm) melted wax into each muffin cup at base of pinecone.

5 Allow kindlers to cool completely. Remove from muffin cups. Arrange in gift basket with note card giving instructions for use.

Birch-l
GIFTS

Birch logs are an idyllic way to bring warmth into a home. If you have easy access to fallen birch trees, use them to brighten others' homes.

In the wintertime, fill a flat basket with several pieces of birch logs. Add color sticks, pinecones, and long fireplace matches to the basket. Remove the matches from the box, tie them in a bundle with raffia, and attach the striking piece, which can be cut from the bottom of the matchbox.

Birch logs are terrific for summertime fireplaces, too. A bundle of three logs tied with raffia and embellished with sprigs of preserved cedar help to brighten unused fireplaces. Your gift recipient can save the bundle and use it year after year.

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